

Iron County Economic Events

Updated 11/16/05

The Iron County Commission approved the applications of Watts Construction and Darro Thuet for prairie dog take permits available through credits purchased from the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration. SITLA, which oversees lands deeded to the state by the federal government to support education, established a mitigation bank to preserve the Utah prairie dog, which is listed on the federal Endangered Species Act as threatened. The agency earned 77 prairie dog credits from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, which counted the rodents and approved the mitigation. Iron County purchased all of SITLA's credits for \$1,636 plus \$200 per credit for the perpetual endowment fund. The values were established based upon a third-party appraisal of the bank-site properties. In turn, the county is selling those credits, at cost, on a first-come, first-served basis to private developers who've been unable to build on their land because of associated management restrictions on prairie dog habitat. <http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2005511150302>

Leggett & Platt Inc. will shut down operation of its Cedar City plant in mid-December, displacing about 70 employees. Leggett & Platt has more plants than it needs based on current demand. The company has held off closing facilities in hopes that demand would go back up, but it can't wait any more. The plant isn't closing but "idling operation." Leggett & Platt will still control the building and there is a possibility that the plant may reopen at a later date. The plant produces commercial fixturing and components, which is a cyclical business. Demand is high in the summer and low during the holidays. If demand increases again, the company might once again need the Cedar City branch.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051112/NEWS01/511120308/1002/NEWS17>

Only four of Cedar City's 141 businesses are in compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act according to the Cedar Disability Action Team. Disability Law Center advocate, Kathy Kessler, said 12 percent of Iron County's population - or 4,123 people - are disabled. She said businesses that ignore ADA guidelines could be liable for breaking the law, and are cutting themselves short on loyal customers and profits. ADA guidelines can be enforced in civil actions. http://www.sltrib.com/utah/ci_3213106

The Schools and Institutional Trust Lands Administration has four major development projects in Cedar City in various stages of progress, including a 750-acre industrial park, called Port 15 Utah, in partnership with Quantum Development Group. Port 15 Utah and a 1,500-acre mixed-use community, planned in Cross Hollows Hills, are 10 to 15 years away from completion. The golf course residential development is in Phase Three and the North Interchange project is in the planning stages.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051029/NEWS01/510290305/1002/NEWS17>

The new, \$6-million terminal at Cedar City Regional Airport officially opened with a dedication ceremony and a flight touching down on a freshly paved runway. The 15,000-square foot building is expected to help the airport set new standards for flight traffic in and out of Cedar City. Ron Reber, chief operating officer of SkyWest, said the terminal will help with expanded regional jet service. The original terminal building, which opened in 1951, will be razed.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,635155799,00.html>

Utah prairie dogs, a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act, live in Sevier, Beaver, Iron, Garfield, Wayne and Piute counties. Some of those counties have had to restrict development on prairie dog habitat to protect the animals. But now a designated habitat site in Iron County will free land for developers while preserving space for the animals. The Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration has created a perpetual conservation easement on 800 acres in south-central Utah.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,615155761,00.html>

Bolstered by the largest freshman class in the school's 108-year history and a whopping increase in non-resident students, Southern Utah University increased its enrollment to a record 6,859 students this fall. Two weeks after Utah State University in Logan and Weber State University in Ogden both reported significant declines, SUU officials were understandably excited to announce a boost in enrollment for the third consecutive year.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051007/NEWS01/510070305/1002>

The new \$6—million, 15,000-square-foot Cedar City Regional Airport terminal will open for the first flight arrival on Oct. 26. It was funded by a \$4 million airport improvement grant from the Federal Aviation Administration and \$1.8 million contributed by the city from revenue made from the sale of three acres of property to the entrance of the Providence Center.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051002/NEWS01/510020307/1002/NEWS17>

A contract between Carter Brothers, Iron County and the Iron County Council on Aging was signed last month for the expansion of the senior center, even though full funding hasn't been acquired. The Iron County Commission approved \$419,067 for the 2,476-square-foot addition to the center at 489 E. 200 South - \$40,000 less than the original estimate for the project. It will partially be paid from a \$240,000 community-development block grant administered through the Five County Association of Governments and \$47,000 approved by the commission. That leaves a balance of \$132,067; fundraising efforts have begun.

http://www.sltrib.com/utah/ci_3080697

The Cedar City Parks and Recreation department has plans for three new city parks that are anticipated to open early next year. The Steven's Canyon Trailhead Park, Ridge

Road Park and the 200 North Park will be funded through \$198,000 in impact fee money, which is collected when new houses are built.

http://www.sltrib.com/utah/ci_3039978

The Cedar City Regional Airport received one of 37 grants awarded under the Small Community Air Service Development Program. The airport will use the \$155,000 grant to explore better ways to serve the people of Iron County. Officials also hope the grant money will help the airport subsidize its third SkyWest flight to Salt Lake City. Currently, SkyWest is making a third trip to Cedar City at "its own risk."

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050826/NEWS01/508260310/1002>

According to the Rocky Mountain Lodging Report, Cedar City showed the highest occupancy rate in Utah at 91.3 percent (with an average room rate of \$71.58).

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600158038,00.html>

Eight Utah counties and one Indian reservation hit hard by floods and landslides earlier this year can receive federal aid, the White House said. President Bush declared that a major disaster existed in the areas and ordered federal monies to supplement state and local recovery efforts. Funds will go to eight counties — Beaver, Box Elder, Iron, Kane, Sevier, Tooele, Uintah and Wasatch — and the Uintah-Ouray Indian Reservation for damages sustained from April 28 to June 29. A FEMA logistics team will establish a FEMA/State Joint Field Office. The Utah Department of Public Safety will work closely with FEMA and local officials to bring disaster relief for public infrastructure in the impacted counties. FEMA covers seventy-five percent of the eligible costs to repair public infrastructure. The declaration also provides hazard mitigation assistance, which allows the state to take actions to prevent or reduce long term risk to life and property from future natural hazards.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600152860,00.html>

If the proposed Lake Powell pipeline gets an extension to Cedar City, water development costs there could be \$5,000 an acre-foot — not counting pumping fees. And that's just fine with the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District. In a nearby parched section of southern Utah, an acre-foot of water rights could go for \$20,000 to \$30,000. Cedar Valley rights are \$1,000 to \$3,000 but are expected eventually to soar beyond \$5,000 because of water scarcity and population growth, say backers. Because of Cedar City's expected growth, the district is anxious to involve itself in the Lake Powell-St. George pipeline project, according to a presentation at a meeting of the state's Water Delivery Financing Task Force last week. In terms of water put on the crops by farmers, the Cedar City pipeline extension would cost about \$460 to \$500 per acre-foot. Compared with other Utah farmers' costs in parts of the state with more abundant water, that is considered high.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600136092,00.html>

San Diego-based Cal-Bay International Inc. announced the closing on the Aspen Cove property, valued at about \$2.6 million. Aspen Cove is near the Brian Head ski resort and

consists of about 45 acres of lakeview building lots and a 14-room waterfront lodge. Cal-Bay said it will develop 15 luxury vacation homes on the property, each of which will be sold for about \$1.2 million. It also plans to remodel the lodge and expand its operations to include winter ski packages to Brian Head.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600136437,00.html>

JPMorgan Chase & Co. will invest \$55 million in an aggressive 12-office expansion of its Utah branch network. The new branches that will be added over the next two years will be opened in cities such as St. George, Cedar City and Logan where Bank One had no offices as well as cities in which the company already has established a presence.

http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_2709301

DHS Products, a manufacturer of abrasive manicure products, has relocated to Cedar City. The company is one of the largest producers of manicure supplies such as fingernail files and buffers. Its products are shipped to Wal-Mart, Target and Walgreens, among other retailers. The company employs about 100 people, about 50 of which are permanent, full-time workers. The others are temporary workers who may move to permanent positions. The company, which moved from Ventura, Calif., had 75 employees before it opened in Cedar City, Nupher said. The facility, located at 1024 N. Production Road, is bigger and includes more storage space and new equipment.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050420/NEWS01/504200343/1002>

Palladon Ventures Ltd. said it has closed on its nearly \$10 million acquisition of an idle iron mine near Cedar City from the bankrupt Geneva Steel. Broomfield, Colo.-based Palladon said it secured an interim loan from Luxor Capital Group, a \$700 million private equity fund based in New York that will now be its partner in the iron ore mining operation. The company is in contact with potential customers interested in purchasing ore from the mine, Palladon President George Young said. In addition, the company intends to begin discussions with outside mining companies that may be interested in operating the mine under contract.

http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_2662310

Intermountain Health Care representatives on hand-delivered a \$125,000 check to Southern Utah University President Steven D. Bennion for the school's nursing program. The money will fund a faculty position that will enable more students to be accepted and graduate from the program. Valley View Medical Center administer Steve Smoot said the purpose of IHC's contribution was to fulfill the organization's mission of community service to facilitate the training of nurses for the workforce in hospitals and clinics, which are experiencing shortages.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050407/NEWS01/504070302/1002>

Both Iron and Washington counties received official disaster designations from U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns in response to the severe flooding that plagued the area in early January. With the official designation, agricultural producers in Iron and

Washington counties and the contiguous counties — Beaver, Garfield and Kane — are eligible to be considered for low-interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency. Producers interested in applying for the loans should contact their local Farm Service Agency. <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600123401,00.html>

The U.S. Department of Commerce has invested \$102,000 in Utah to boost economic development. The agency's Economic Development Administration divided the money between the Six County Economic Development District of Richfield and the Five County Association of Governments in St. George. Each organization has been allotted \$51,000 to aid their economic development planning programs. http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_2611772

The state Legislature approved \$10 million for the teacher education building at Southern Utah University was approved by the Legislature. The move brought to a close a six-year drive by the university to fund the construction. The funding approved for the new building was accomplished without bonding, which was made possible by the state surplus. An additional \$1.5 million grant from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation will complete the funding for the building. It will be constructed adjacent to the 107-year-old Old Main building on the upper end of the campus - the site of the original college. <http://www.thespectrum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050304/NEWS01/503040306/1002>

The Rocky Mountain Lodging Report for January indicates that Cedar City had the lowest hotel occupancy rate of 34.4 percent in the state. The average room rate measured \$49.52. Utah hotels had an occupancy rate of 57.6 percent in January, up from 53.7 percent a year earlier. The average room rate was \$84.16, up from \$80.82 a year ago. <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,600113953,00.html>

Palladon Ventures Ltd. has never developed a major mining project, but that is not stopping the "junior mining" company from talking up its plans for southern Utah. Having secured a contract giving it the right to buy an idle iron ore mine near Cedar City for \$10 million from the bankrupt Geneva Steel, the company and its partner, Western Utah Copper Co., say they want to develop a steel mill that will cost as much as \$1 billion adjacent to the mine. Plans for the steel mill are in addition to the huge Bingham Canyon-like copper project the joint-venture partnership envisions for property it holds near Milford. Before the two companies can move forward on their billion-dollar steel mill plan, though, they must raise approximately \$10 million by April 9 to complete the acquisition of the Cedar City area iron-ore property from Geneva subsidiary Iron Ore Mines LLC, which last operated the property in 1995. http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_2559449

The Automated Flight Service Center in Cedar City will close as part of a nationwide Federal Aviation Administration consolidation and privatization initiative. However, the facility's 32 employees won't have to start looking for new jobs right away. Lockheed

Martin, which won the \$1.9 billion outsourcing contract, won't take over until fall - and it could be well into 2006 before the Cedar City center shuts down. The Cedar FSC, the only one in Utah, is one of 38 such stations targeted for closure by Lockheed. The closest centers among the 20 chosen to survive are in Prescott, Ariz., Denver and Reno, Nev. But Cedar City Mayor Gerald Sherratt said his community of about 22,000 is not ready to lose its center without a fight.

http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_2550193

SkyWest has announced plans to add a daily round-trip flight between St. George and Salt Lake City, and another between Cedar City and Salt Lake. The change, effective March 2, is part of SkyWest's plan to increase service between Salt Lake City and seven U.S. cities. The seventh St. George route will be available on a seasonal basis. The airline will return to six daily departures from June 7 to Sept. 30. The additional Salt Lake flights are part of SkyWest's transition process as the airline ends its contract with Continental Airlines and closes operations at the Dallas/Fort Worth hub.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/news/stories/20050203/localnews/1949503.html>

The Utah Division of Business and Economic Development's Office of Rural Development has a new Web site to help rural Utah businesses get information about unique resources available to rural firms. The features of the site, www.rural.utah.gov, include a section that spotlights news about rural Utah and accesses a wide range of newsletters relating to rural economic development issues. Rural entrepreneurs with questions can access a help desk to get a personal e-mail reply.

<http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,595107829,00.html>

A developer who specializes in building retail centers in smaller communities has offered \$1.89 million for 3.61 acres of prime retail space across the street from the Providence Center's lighthouse landmark. Brett Hastings and Jeff Creer of CHB Commercial Land Development in Centerville presented to City Council a proposal to turn the vacant piece of land along the south Interstate 15 interchange into a retail center with a full-service restaurant, quick-stop shop carrying everyday items such as food and other goods, a bank and other specialty shops.

<http://www.thespectrum.com/news/stories/20041118/localnews/1610414.html>

Southern Utah University's Old Main Building is empty, in need of \$3 million in renovations to modernize utilities and protect it from potential earthquakes. Money is available, but SUU President Steven Bennion wants to raise an additional \$2 million so Old Main can be connected to a proposed \$10 million education building the university has been trying to build for the past several years. Funding for the new structure has been sought from Utah lawmakers for the past six years. That project slowly is making its way up the new-building list - it now is No. 6 - managed by the Division of Facilities and Construction Management, which recommends construction priorities to the Legislature. http://www.sltrib.com/utah/ci_2453221